

Copyright Board of Canada

2011-12

Estimates

Part III - Report on Plans and Priorities

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Minister's Message

As Canada's economy shows continued signs of growth following the global recession, the Harper government has a clear vision for Canada. We remain focused on creating jobs and economic growth in all regions of Canada. We remain committed to fighting protectionism, the number one impediment to global economic recovery. And we will continue to support science and technology as it drives innovation to improve quality of life for Canadians.

In the coming year, Industry Canada and its portfolio partners will seize the opportunities of the evolving global economy. We will set the conditions for industrial success by improving the policy we put in place, making strategic investments and supporting business-focused programs and services. We are working to remove impediments to competition and to create the best climate for international investment. Industry Canada will lead efforts in developing major policy initiatives to support Canada's digital economy, and shape a whole-of-government strategy for federal tourism activities. The Department will also improve the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of its own operations and work with recovering industries and sectors to help assure a solid and prosperous future.

In 2011-12, the Copyright Board Canada will continue to ensure balanced decision making and provide proper incentives for the creation and use of copyrighted works. The Board will also examine possible avenues to improve its practices and procedures, with the aim of streamlining them and reducing uncertainty while safeguarding fairness of the process.

And, as always, I will work with the Industry portfolio partners, the private sector and other governments to create the fundamentals for a strong and competitive economy.

It is my pleasure to present this year's Report on Plans and Priorities for the Copyright Board Canada.

Christian Paradis
Minister of Industry and
Minister of State (Agriculture)

Section I: Departmental Overview

Raison d'être

The Copyright Board of Canada's program objective is to set royalties which are fair and equitable to both copyright owners and users of copyright-protected works. This includes setting fair and equitable terms and conditions so as to permit the use of works when the owner of the copyright cannot be located.

The Board is an independent administrative agency that has been conferred department status for purposes of the *Financial Administration Act*. The mandate of the Board is set out in the *Copyright Act* (the "*Act*"). The Board is empowered to establish, either mandatorily or at the request of an interested party, the royalties to be paid for the use of copyrighted works when the administration of such works is entrusted to a collective administrative society.

The Copyright Board of Canada is an economic regulator. It deals with complex social, cultural, demographic, economic and technological issues. The Board's decisions are not appealable, but can be the subject of judicial review by the Federal Court of Appeal. The Board has existed in one form or another since the 1930s, but its jurisdiction was significantly expanded in 1989 and 1997.

The program objective of the Board underlies the achievement of strategic outcomes related to innovation through new knowledge, which has become the main source of competitive advantage in all sectors of economic activity and is closely associated with increased exports, productivity growth, and the creation of new firms.

In this context, our country's handling of intellectual property matters is a critical element in our long-term success in innovation, and by extension, to our long-term economic health. The terms and conditions by which intellectual property owners (such as owners of copyrighted works) are compensated will largely define the incentive structure for innovation in and creation of copyrighted materials. In addition, the design and implementation of regulations can have a significant impact on innovation and competitiveness, particularly in the areas of intellectual property rights.

Operating Environment

The mandate of the Copyright Board of Canada is set out in the *Act* as amended in 1997. The Board has powers of a substantive and procedural nature. Some powers are granted to the Board expressly in the *Act*, and some are implicitly recognized by the courts.

The *Act* requires that the Board certify tariffs in the following fields: the public performance or communication of musical works and of sound recordings of musical works, the retransmission of distant television and radio signals, the reproduction of television and radio programs by educational institutions and private copying. In other fields where rights are administered collectively, the Board can be asked by a collective society to set a tariff; if not, the Board can act as an arbitrator if the collective society and a user cannot agree on the terms and conditions of a licence.

The examination process is always the same. The collective society must file a statement of proposed royalties which the Board publishes in the *Canada Gazette*. Tariffs always come into effect on January 1. On or before the preceding 31st of March, the collective society must file a proposed statement of royalties. The users targeted by the proposal (or in the case of private copying, any interested person) or their representatives may object to the statement within sixty days of its publication. The collective society in question and the opponents will then have the opportunity to argue their case in a hearing before the Board. After deliberations, the Board certifies the tariff, publishes it in the *Canada Gazette*, and explains the reasons for its decision in writing.

As a rule, the Board holds hearings. No hearing will be held if proceeding in writing accommodates a small user that would otherwise incur large costs. The hearing may be dispensed with on certain preliminary or interim issues. No hearings have been held yet for a request to use a work whose owner cannot be located. The process has been kept simple. Information is obtained either in writing or through telephone calls.

Mandate, Roles and Responsibilities

Mandate of the Board
The Board is an economic regulatory body empowered to establish, either mandatorily or at the request of an interested party, the royalties to be paid for the use of copyrighted works, when the administration of such copyright is entrusted to a collective-administration society. The Board also has the right to supervise agreements between users and licensing bodies and issues licences when the copyright owner cannot be located.

The Copyright Board of Canada was established on February 1, 1989, as the successor of the Copyright Appeal Board. Its responsibilities under the *Act* are to:

- certify tariffs for the public performance or the communication to the public by telecommunication of musical works and sound recordings [sections 67 to 69];
- certify tariffs, at the option of a collective society referred to in section 70.1, for the doing of any protected act mentioned in sections 3, 15, 18 and 21 of the *Act* [sections 70.1 to 70.191];
- set royalties payable by a user to a collective society, when there is disagreement on the royalties or on the related terms and conditions [sections 70.2 to 70.4];
- certify tariffs for the retransmission of distant television and radio signals or the reproduction and public performance by educational institutions, of radio or television news or news commentary programs and all other programs, for educational or training purposes [sections 71 to 76];
- set levies for the private copying of recorded musical works [sections 79 to 88];

- rule on applications for non-exclusive licences to use published works, fixed performances, published sound recordings and fixed communication signals, when the copyright owner cannot be located [section 77];
- examine, at the request of the Commissioner of Competition appointed under the *Competition Act*, agreements made between a collective society and a user which have been filed with the Board, where the Commissioner considers that the agreement is contrary to the public interest [sections 70.5 and 70.6];
- set compensation, under certain circumstances, for formerly unprotected acts in countries that later join the Berne Convention, the Universal Convention or the Agreement establishing the World Trade Organization [section 78].

In addition, the Minister of Industry can direct the Board to conduct studies with respect to the exercise of its powers [section 66.8].

Finally, any party to a licence agreement with a collective society can file the agreement with the Board within 15 days of its conclusion, thereby avoiding certain provisions of the *Competition Act* [section 70.5].

Strategic Outcome and Program Activity Architecture (PAA)

Program Activity Architecture	
STRATEGIC OUTCOME	PROGRAM ACTIVITY
Fair decision-making to provide proper incentives for the creation and use of copyrighted works	→ Copyright Tariff Setting and Issuance of Licences
	→ Internal Services

Planning Summary

Financial Resources (\$ thousands)

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
3,125	3,125	3,125

Human Resources (Full-time Equivalent – FTE)

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
16	16	16

Note: In addition to the 16 full-time equivalent employees, the Board has up to a maximum of 5 Governor-in-Council appointees.

Strategic Outcome: Fair decision-making to provide proper incentives for the creation and use of copyrighted works						
Performance Indicator			Target			
1. Percentage of tariff decisions published within 12 months			70% of tariff decisions will be published within one year			
2. Percentage of licences issued within 45 days			70% of licences will be issued within 45 days			
3. Level of satisfaction of stakeholders			70% satisfaction rate			
Program Activity	Expected Results	Forecast Spending 2010-11 (\$ thousands)	Planned Spending (\$ thousands)			Alignment to Government of Canada Outcomes
			2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	
Copyright Tariff Setting and Issuance of Licences	Fair and Equitable Tariffs and Conditions	2,512	2,514	2,514	2,514	An innovative and knowledge-based economy
Internal Services		598	611	611	611	
Total Planned Spending		3,110	3,125	3,125	3,125	

Innovation through new knowledge has become the main source of competitive advantage in all sectors of economic activity and is closely associated with increased exports, productivity growth, and the creation of new firms. In this context, our country's handling of intellectual property matters is a critical element in our long-term success in innovation, and by extension, to our long-term economic health. The terms and conditions by which intellectual property owners (such as owners of copyrighted works) are compensated will largely define the incentive structure for innovation in and creation of copyrighted materials. In addition, the design and implementation of regulations can have a significant impact on innovation and competitiveness, particularly in the areas of intellectual property rights.

The Copyright Board of Canada recognizes the need to ensure an effective and efficient copyright regulatory regime in order to attain the maximum productivity in those sectors that create and use copyrighted works. Further, the strategic outcomes of a fair and competitive marketplace and reasonable opportunities for Canadian firms to export copyright protected goods and services in the music, content creation and programming areas, as well as the downstream broadcasting, publishing and entertainment industries will be impacted by the performance of the Copyright Board of Canada.

Contribution of Priorities to Strategic Outcome

Departmental Priorities

Priority Name	Type	Links to Strategic Outcome	Description
1. Ensure timely and fair processes and decisions	Ongoing	Fair decision-making to provide proper incentives for the creation and use of copyrighted works	Leads to a more efficient process and to decisions that take into account the ever-changing technological environment, global events and new business models
2. Advance the analytical framework for decisions and the regulatory processes for tariff-setting	Ongoing		Ensures a proper assessment by the Board of risks associated with economic and technological changes in relevant industries
3. Improve management practices	Ongoing		Favours the implementation of relevant and efficient management practices at the Board

Operational Priorities

There are three priorities associated with the Copyright Board of Canada's strategic outcome of achieving fair decision-making to provide proper incentives for the creation and uses of copyrighted works. These are:

Ensure timely and fair processes and decisions

To achieve this priority, the Board will need to ensure that participation costs in the hearing process are kept as low as possible, thus encouraging participation of the appropriate parties and streamlining the process. The Board will also need to provide appropriate guidance, information and analysis to the participants in order to facilitate the examination process and to foster greater participants' satisfaction. This will be done in particular through telephone advisories and case management meetings with representatives. Finally, by engaging in pre-hearing consultations and information gathering, and by conducting well organized proceedings which address key issues facing copyright-related industries, the Board will be able to issue timely, fair and consistent decisions.

The monitoring of this priority will be achieved by informally surveying hearing participants, with follow-up examination and determination of alternative procedural practices to improve the efficiency of the regulatory process. The achievement of this result is also directly monitored through the timely conduct of hearing processes and lack

of interruption in proceedings due to administrative and technical delays. In addition, the implementation of a pre-hearing joint statement of (non-contested) facts and handling of legal issues solely through written submissions will improve the efficiency of the process. Finally, the Board plans to continue to examine, for each process, how to structure and sequence witnesses and hearing stages so as to eliminate duplication and maximize time spent on relevant issues.

In addition, in 2011-2012 the Board plans to establish a working group comprised of key stakeholders that will examine possible avenues to improve the Board's rules of practice and procedure. These improvements should aim at reducing uncertainty and streamlining the procedures while safeguarding the fairness of the process.

The rationale underlying this priority is to minimize administrative costs to Canadians from the setting of tariffs and to streamline the process in the face of increasing complexities in hearing subject matter, thus increasing regulatory efficiency. To the extent that this also leads to fairer decision-making, the overall innovation capability of parties affected by the copyright tariff process will be improved.

Advance the analytical framework for decisions and the regulatory processes for tariff-setting

Among the most significant risks which the Board faces in achieving its strategic outcomes are the potentially disruptive impact of new technologies, in particular on how copyright material is utilized, distributed and monitored. Fair and equitable decisions critically depend on the Board's ability to identify, understand and assess the industry issues before they undermine or adversely impact existing copyright regimes. The Board's approach to managing the technology risk is to systematically monitor relevant journals, other publications and websites, and to attend industry seminars and conferences.

Knowledge of the international experience is also a key tool in addressing the challenges of changing technology and the impact of global events. By comparing experiences across different countries, the Board expects to gain early warning of significant developments and their likely impacts on the Canadian situation.

Leadership in copyright matters will continue to build on the groundwork performed in the past. The Board plans to continue its leadership role in the establishment and expansion of international activities such as sharing of procedures, data, analysis and other information. With a view to further this leadership, the Board will continue to be actively involved with the international Society for Economic Research on Copyright Issues in 2011-2012.

By its involvement in international activities as they relate to copyright tariff setting in other parts of the world, the Board ensures that its own tariff-setting processes and decisions are cognizant of developments outside of Canada.

Management Priorities

Improve Management Practices

The Board will work toward improving governance and management processes to strengthen organizational capacity and ensure clear accountability for results. In particular, this involves restructuring some of the positions, as well as intensifying our recruitment efforts to fill some of the vacant positions.

The Board is committed to offer training and development to all of its employees, thus encouraging learning and skills development on the part of all employees.

The Board will review its Human Resources Plan to assess the changing needs of the Board and will take into account succession planning. It is essential that the Board has the capacity it needs to better react to the changing nature of work driven by technology, resulting in better service to Canadians.

Furthermore, it will continue to work on an evaluation strategy and performance measurement tools, as well as a legacy storage system for the Board's files.

Risk Analysis

The Board is responsible for tariffs that are estimated to be worth over \$300 million annually. In fact, copyright tariffs underpin several industries which, according to a Conference Board of Canada study (Valuing Culture, Measuring and Understanding Canada's Creative Economy, Conference Board of Canada, August 2008), generated in 2007 an amount representing 7.4% of Canada's GDP when taking into account the direct, indirect and induced contribution. They also contributed 1.1 million jobs to the economy. The stakes are considerable for both copyright holders and users. Consequently, interventions before the Board are thorough, sophisticated and often involve expert witnesses, litigation specialists and detailed econometric, business and financial studies, surveys and evidence.

The Board must consider the underlying technologies (such as the Internet, digital radio, satellite communications), the economic issues and the interests of owners and users in order to contribute, with fair and equitable decisions, to the continued growth of this component of Canada's knowledge industries. Sound tariff decisions avoid serious disruption in affected sectors of the national economy and costly and time-consuming court challenges.

The decisions the Board makes are constrained in several respects. These constraints come from sources external to the Board: the law, regulations and judicial pronouncements. Others are self-imposed, in the form of guiding principles that can be found in the Board's decisions.

Court decisions also provide a large part of the framework within which the Board operates. Most decisions focus on issues of procedure, or apply the general principles of

administrative decision-making to the specific circumstances of the Board. However, the courts have also set out several substantive principles for the Board to follow or that determine the ambit of the Board's mandate or discretion.

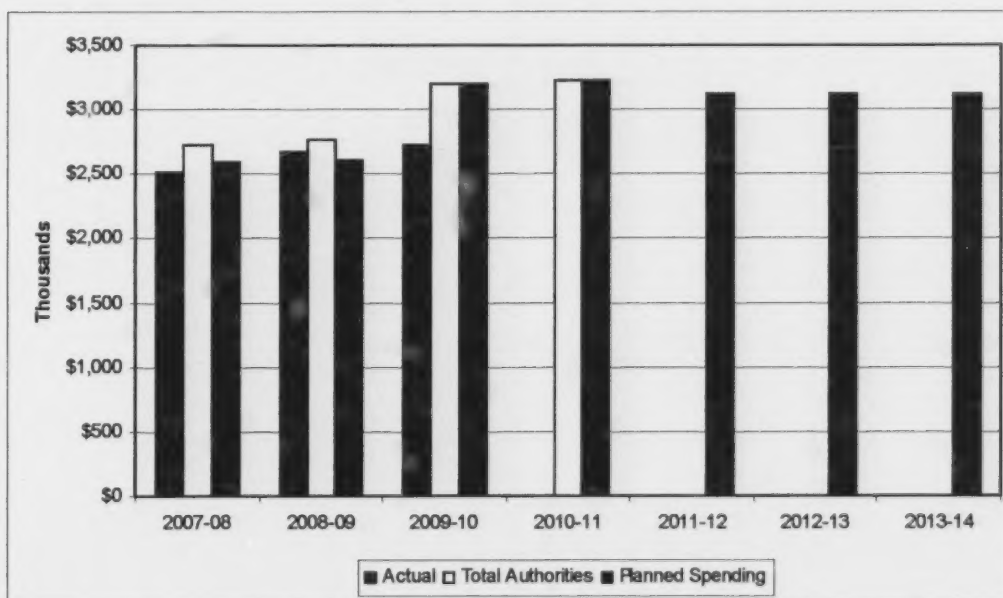
The Board also enjoys a fair amount of discretion, especially in areas of fact or policy. In making decisions, the Board itself has used various principles or concepts. Strictly speaking, these principles are not binding on the Board. They can be challenged by anyone at anytime. Indeed, the Board would illegally fetter its discretion if it considered itself bound by its previous decisions. However, these principles do offer guidance to both the Board and those who appear before it. In fact, they are essential to ensuring a desirable amount of consistency in decision-making.

Among those factors, the following seem to be the most prevalent: the coherence between the various elements of the public performance of music tariffs, the practicality aspects, the ease of administration to avoid tariff structures that make it difficult to administer the tariff in a given market, the search for non-discriminatory practices, the relative use of protected works, the taking into account of Canadian circumstances, the stability in the setting of tariffs that minimizes disruption to users, as well as the comparisons with "proxy" markets and comparisons with similar prices in foreign markets.

Expenditure Profile

For fiscal year 2011-12, the Copyright Board of Canada plans to spend \$3.1 million to meet the expected results of its program activities and contribute to its strategic outcome.

The figure below illustrates the Copyright Board of Canada's spending trend from 2007-08 to 2013-14.



For the 2007-08 to 2010-11 periods, the total spending includes all Parliamentary appropriations: Main Estimates, Supplementary Estimates, Treasury Board Vote 10, 15, and 23. It also includes carry forward adjustments. For the 2011-12 to 2013-14 periods, the total and the planned spending coincide. Supplementary funding and carry forward adjustments are unknown at this point and are therefore not reflected.

The core funding excludes carry forward adjustments and supplementary funding. It illustrates the baseline funding the Copyright Board of Canada receives from Parliamentary appropriations.

Voted and Statutory Items

		(\$ thousands)	
Vote or Statutory Item	Truncated Vote or Statutory Wording	2011-12 Main Estimates	2010-11 Main Estimates
45	Program expenditures	2,815	2,818
(S)	Contributions to employee benefit plans	310	293
	Total Department	3,125	3,110

Note: The difference between the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 Main Estimates is due to salary increases and adjustments to the Employee benefit plans.

Details may not add to totals due to rounding.

Section II: Analysis of Program Activities by Strategic Outcome

Strategic Outcome

The Board's strategic outcome is: **fair decision-making to provide proper incentives for the creation and uses of copyrighted works.**

The Board is continuously looking for ways to improve the efficiency of the hearing process by minimizing the overall participants' expenses while ensuring that the process and the tariffs remain fair and equitable. The key partners in this endeavour are the private interest parties who appear before the Board, and include the various collective societies that represent rights owners and associations and organizations representing users of works.

To ensure fair decision-making, the Board will periodically measure stakeholders' satisfaction. A formal survey will be conducted either electronically or by telephone. The survey will assess the degree of satisfaction of its stakeholders with regard to the services it provides either as part of a hearing process leading to the certification of a tariff or in a process leading to the issuance of a licence.

With respect to this survey of the stakeholders' satisfaction with the Board's services, the Board believes that an initial satisfaction rate target of 70 per cent is reasonable, considering that this will be the first time such a survey is administered.

Program Activity: Copyright Tariff Setting and Issuance of Licences

Human Resources (FTEs) and Planned Spending (\$ thousands)					
2011-12		2012-13		2013-14	
FTEs	Planned Spending	FTEs	Planned Spending	FTEs	Planned Spending
14	2,514	14	2,514	14	2,514

The statutory mandate of the Board is to establish tariffs to be paid for the use of copyrighted works, when the administration of such copyright is entrusted to a collective-administration society. It is by rendering decisions and issuing licences that the Board fulfils its mandate.

Both the copyright holders and users are stakeholders in this outcome. Consequently, interventions before the Board are thorough and sophisticated, involving experts witnesses, litigation specialists and detailed econometric, business and financial studies, surveys and evidence. In rendering decisions, the Board must consider the underlying technologies (such as the Internet, digital radio, satellite communications), the economic issues and the interests of owners and users in order to contribute, with fair and equitable decisions, to the continued growth of this component of Canada's knowledge industries.

Sound tariff decisions avoid serious disruption in affected sectors of the national economy and costly time-consuming court challenges.

Improving the efficiency of the regulatory process involves continual refinements in scheduling of witnesses, establishing and communicating the parameters of the hearing to participants, consulting with key stakeholders and developing codes of hearing practice and related guidelines for the conduct of hearings. By improving the efficiency of the tariff hearing process, this activity is expected to contribute to the objective of reducing the regulatory burden.

Delays in providing written decisions to Canadian copyright industry stakeholders can cause uncertainty, thus impacting on the Board's capacity to provide incentives for the creation and use of copyrighted works. Therefore, we will gather data on the number of months between the date when a particular tariff file is closed, and the date of the corresponding decision.

With respect to the number of months before a tariff decision is issued, the Board believes that a target of 12 months should be set for the next fiscal year, with a complying percentage of 70 per cent. Considering that the Board's resources have recently increased, it would be unrealistic to set a shorter target. However, in the next few years, as new personnel are added, the Board will re-examine the possibility of reducing the 12-month target.

In addition, pursuant to section 77 of the *Act*, the Board may grant licences that authorize the use of published works, fixed performances, published sound recordings and fixed communication signals if the copyright owner cannot be located. Since 1989, the Board has issued 214 such licences. The Board's objective with respect to this activity is to issue licences in a timely manner. Therefore, we will also gather data on the number of months between the date when a particular licence file is closed, and the date of issuance of the licence.

With respect to the number of months before a licence is issued, the Board believes that a delay of 45 days between the file completion date and the issuance of the licence is appropriate, and that this delay should be met in at least 70 per cent of the files. Again, as new resources are added to this area, the Board will re-examine the possibility of reducing the 45-day target.

Program Activity: Internal Services

Human Resources (FTEs) and Planned Spending (\$ thousands)					
2011-12		2012-13		2013-14	
FTEs	Planned Spending	FTEs	Planned Spending	FTEs	Planned Spending
2	611	2	611	2	611

This activity deals with financial and materiel management policies, systems, processes and standards. In implementing these policies, compliance with Parliament's requirements for financial stewardship and probity must be ensured. This activity also encompasses the responsibility of providing human resource services.

The Board receives timely support from internal services, namely: finance; human resources; communications; information management and information technology.

By focusing on the priorities described earlier in this report with respect to management practices, this activity contributes to the creation of an environment that will allow the Board to fulfill its mandate and realize its objective.

Benefits for Canadians

As mentioned before, the Board is responsible for tariffs underpinning several cultural industries, and are estimated to be worth over \$300 million annually. Cultural industries are growing at a rapid pace and are at the heart of the knowledge economy. In particular, the Canadian system of collective copyright administration is a healthy and growing part of our economy. Cultural industries' ability to continue to grow depends heavily on well-thought-out decisions respecting copyright. The mishandling of royalty issues related to retransmission, reproduction, neighbouring rights, private copying or public performance of music could cause serious disruptions in certain sectors of the industry, and would also lead to costly and time-consuming legal challenges. Timeliness in rendering decisions can impact on the growth and innovation in the Canadian economy.

Section III: Supplementary Information

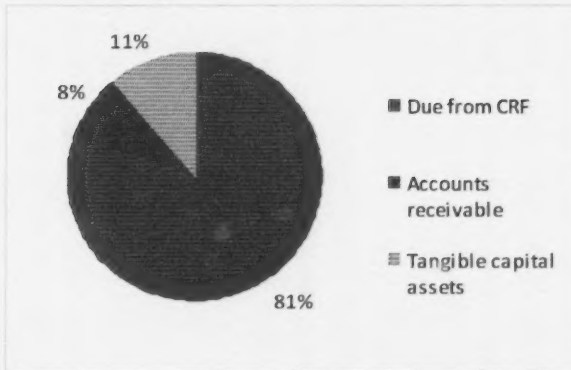
Financial Highlights

The future-oriented financial highlights presented within this *Report on Plans and Priorities* are intended to serve as a general overview of the Copyright Board of Canada's financial position and operations. These future-oriented financial highlights are prepared on an accrual basis to strengthen accountability and improve transparency and financial management.

Future-oriented financial statements can be found on the Board's website at:
<http://www.cb-cda.gc.ca>.

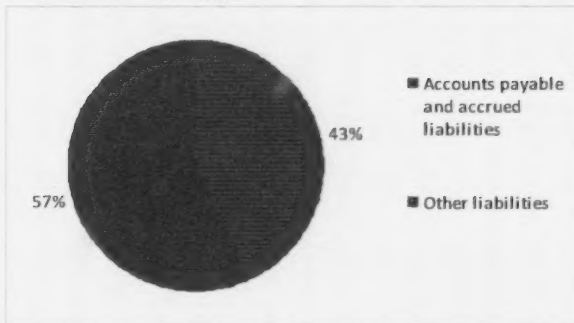
(in thousands of dollars)	% Change	Estimated Results 2010-11	Forecast 2011-12
Condensed Future-oriented Statement of Financial Position (unaudited)			
At March 31			
Assets			
Due from the Consolidated Revenue Fund	8%	207	223
Accounts Receivable and Advances	-26%	31	23
Tangible Capital Assets	-26%	42	31
TOTAL	-1%	280	277
Liabilities			
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	3%	238	246
Other Liabilities	0%	324	324
Total Liabilities	1%	562	570
Equity	4%	(282)	(293)
TOTAL	-1%	280	277
Condensed Future-oriented Statement of Operations (unaudited)			
For the period ended March 31			
Expenses			
Salaries and Employee Benefits	1%	2,134	2,148
Other Expenses	0%	1,335	1,335
NET COST OF OPERATIONS	0%	3,469	3,483

Assets by Type



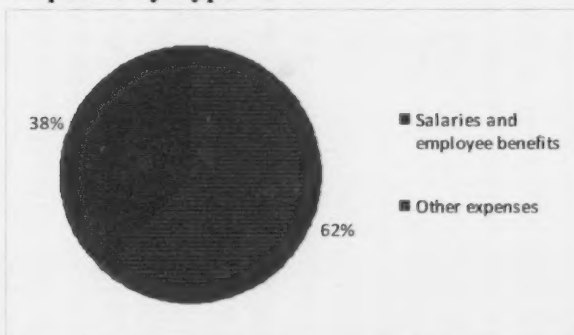
It is projected that total assets will be valued at \$277,000 in fiscal year 2011-12. This is composed of amount due from Consolidated Revenue Fund (81% or \$223,000), tangible capital assets (11% or \$31,000) and accounts receivable (8% or \$23,000).

Liabilities by Type



It is projected that total liabilities will be \$570,000 for fiscal year 2011-12. This is mostly made up of vacation pay and severance benefits (57% or \$324,000) and accounts payable and accrued liabilities (43% or \$246,000).

Expenses by Type



For fiscal year 2011-12, it is projected that total expenses will be \$3.5 million. Most of these expenses are made up of salaries and employee benefits (62% or \$2.2 million), and operating expenses (38% or \$1.3 million). The majority of these latter expenses are required for the Board's policy role. The balance is made up of expenses associated with internal services.

Section IV: Other Items of Interest

Organizational Information

Board Members

Board members are appointed by the Governor in Council to hold office during good behaviour for a term not exceeding five years. They may be reappointed once.

The *Act* requires that the Chairman must be a judge, either sitting or retired, of a superior, county or district court. The Chairman directs the work of the Board and apportions its caseload among the members.

The *Act* also designates the Vice-Chairman as Chief Executive Officer of the Board. He or she exercises direction over the Board and supervises its staff.

The organizational structure of the Board follows the requirements set out in section 66 and following sections of the *Act*.

Board's Staff

The Board has a staff of sixteen employees, organized around five operational groups:

1. The Registrar, which plans and manages all activities and resources related to public hearings, and the issuing of licences for the use of works whose copyright owners cannot be located, which includes receiving, organizing and reviewing the documentary evidence and information, and organizing and maintaining the Board's records, archives and library.
2. The Research and Analysis group, which is responsible for the preparation and analysis of reports and research papers, the development of scenario analysis and recommendations and the provision of economic support to Board members and for decisions.
3. The Legal Analysis group, which provides legal analysis and advice on tariff and licence applications before the Board, and represents the Board before the Courts in matters involving its jurisdiction.
4. The Corporate Services group, which is responsible for financial and materiel management policies, systems, processes and standards which are consistent with modern comptrollership.
5. The Technical Support group, which provides support in particular in respect of informatics.